



# PRESS RELEASE

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## CITY OF SEAT PLEASANT, MARYLAND LEVERAGES MASTERCARD SOLUTIONS TO PROVIDE EMERGENCY RELIEF FOR MOST VULNERABLE RESIDENTS

*“Invest in Hope” Campaign Will Fund Mastercard-branded Debit Cards for Basic Living Expenses, Kicked Off by Donation from Former Resident Wanda Durant*

**April 15, 2020 (Seat Pleasant, Maryland)** – Mayor Eugene W. Grant announced the launch of a GoFundMe fundraising campaign, [Invest in Hope](#), with a goal of helping The City of Seat Pleasant’s most vulnerable residents with essential living expenses amid the COVID-19 pandemic. The campaign was seeded with a generous donation from Wanda Durant, former resident and mother of NBA star Kevin Durant.

Eligible residents can apply for financial assistance which will be distributed through debit cards enabled by [Mastercard’s City Possible](#) network in partnership with [Usio](#). The program provides direct relief to families and residents living at or below the poverty line to use for basic living expenses, such as food, health care, or utilities. In addition to the Mastercard City Possible Program and Usio, Mayor Grant and Seat Pleasant would like to acknowledge IGNITE Cities, a mayoral advisory firm specializing in smart city initiatives, for their efforts in facilitating and spearheading the formation of this partnership.

In March, the City of Seat Pleasant announced the launch of disease surveillance and chronic disease management telehealth system in partnership with EagleForce and Freedman’s Health. The system will screen and monitor for disease outbreaks and enable the expansion of telehealth management of chronic medical conditions for persons most at risk of COVID-19 mortality. Seat Pleasant’s position as a small, smart city makes it an ideal trial ground for this type of pilot program that could be applied to other cities at scale. In contributing to this fundraising campaign, donors will be supporting a community that is helping to pave the way for future disease outbreak prevention and control.

“Putting the safety and security of our residents first is always our primary goal, especially during these trying times,” said Mayor Grant. “COVID-19 has brought with it a severe economic downturn, including the closing of many businesses and the loss of wages and jobs. Partnering with major international companies, such as Mastercard, has made it possible for our Smart City of Excellence to help alleviate the burdens faced by our residents during this pandemic.”

The mayor encourages people to make donations in any amount - even \$5, \$10 or \$20 - as it will help impoverished people who need it the most at this time. In addition, the city hopes that businesses and other partners will provide larger donations or in-kind support for the fund.

## **About The City of Seat Pleasant, MD**

Founded in 1931, the city of Seat Pleasant is a small bedroom community west of Washington, DC in Prince George's County, Maryland. Its government is balanced with a Mayor and Seven Councilmembers. Seat Pleasant: A Smart City of Excellence is committed to finding ways to deliver services effectively and efficiently and provide meaningful and innovative methods to engage our citizenry. The City of Seat Pleasant is the first Smart City in the state of Maryland offering Smart City services that are better, faster, and personalized making it a "City for Me" using information and communication technology, with the internet of things.

For more information on the City of Seat Pleasant, visit us online at [www.seatpleasantmd.gov](http://www.seatpleasantmd.gov) or [www.smallsmartcity.org](http://www.smallsmartcity.org), Twitter @SeatPleasant1 or Facebook at [www.facebook.com/cityofseatpleasant](https://www.facebook.com/cityofseatpleasant).

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